

Claims:

1. A picture frame for display of a picture or photograph comprising a frame structure (1) defining a viewing window (2), the picture/photograph being positioned behind the window, an illumination panel mountable to the frame structure behind the picture/photograph and operable to illuminate the rear of the picture/photograph evenly over substantially the entire area thereof corresponding to the area of the viewing window, the illumination panel comprising a sheet (10) of transparent material with front and rear faces and having a texturing material (17) applied to the front face (11) in a distributed pattern to maintain an air gap between the front face and a film (12) of translucent material positioned against the transparent sheet, and a source of light (14) disposed along an edge of the transparent sheet (10).
2. An illumination panel assembly for back illumination of a picture or photograph in a display frame, comprising a sheet of transparent material (10) having front and rear faces, and a source of light (14) disposed along at least one edge portion of the transparent sheet (10), the front face (11) of the transparent sheet (10) having a texturing material (17) applied thereto in a distributed pattern to maintain an air gap between the front face (12) and a film (12) of translucent material applied against the transparent sheet (10) whereby substantially uniform transmission of light emanating from the source of light is obtained through the translucent film (12) over at least the area of the front face having said pattern of texturing material applied thereto.
3. A picture frame or an illumination panel assembly according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the texturing material is printed onto the front face (11) of the transparent sheet (10).

4. A picture frame or an illumination panel assembly according to claim 3 wherein the texturing is printed onto the front face of sheet material in a regular dot matrix pattern.
5. A picture frame or an illumination panel assembly according to claim 3 or 4, wherein the texturing material is a white ink material.
6. A picture frame or illumination panel assembly according to any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein an opaque backing sheet (13) covers the rear face of the transparent sheet.
7. A picture frame or an illumination panel assembly according to any one of claims 1 to 6, wherein the source of light comprises a plurality of discrete light sources (14).
8. A picture frame or an illumination panel assembly according to claim 7, wherein the light sources are located in recesses (20) at the peripheral edge of the transparent sheet.
9. A picture frame or an illumination panel assembly according to claim 7 or 8, wherein the light sources are opto electronic devices (14).
10. A picture frame or an illumination panel assembly according to claim 8 or 9, wherein the light sources are diodes (14).
11. A picture frame or an illumination panel assembly according to any one of claims 7 to 10, wherein a circuit board (15) is mounted at an edge of the transparent sheet (10) and carries the light sources (14) positioned along the edge of the transparent sheet.

12. A picture frame or an illumination panel assembly according to claim 12, wherein the circuit board (15) and the light sources are accommodated in a channel-shaped housing (16).

13. A picture frame or an illumination panel assembly according to any one of claim 1 to 12, wherein the panel assembly of the transparent sheet (10) and translucent film (12) has a thickness from 2 to 7 mm.

14. An illumination panel assembly according to any one of claims 2 to 13, in combination with an annular mount (30) having a central opening (34) and a recess adapted to receive the illumination panel assembly (3).

15. An illumination panel assembly and mount according to claim 14, wherein the mount (30) is corrugated in cross-section.

16. An illumination panel and mount according to claim 14 or 15, wherein the mount (30) is made of sheet material that can be easily cut with a sharp cutting device for removing a peripheral portion of the mount to enable the mount to be inserted into a picture frame.

17. An illumination panel and mount according to claim 14, 15 or 16, wherein the recess is off-centre relative to the opening (34).

18. An illumination panel and mount according to claim 17 wherein the recess is defined by a rebate (35) around the opening (34), the width of the rebate being increased along an edge of the opening for accommodating the light sources (14).